

To Honorable Judge Ronnie White,

My name is Gwendolyn Smotherman and I'm the maternal grandmother of Johnathan Jamar Dickerson. I am writing this letter in hopes to giving you the background of the person (my grandson) who is being tried for a crime that resulted in a young lady losing her life. Please your honor understand I'm not here painting this perfect picture of my grandson because I'm a woman of God and I believe right is right and wrong is wrong. So please, if I come off as sounding inconsiderate or uncompassionate for the loss of the young lady's life, please forgive me.

But I would like for you to know my grandson from my perspective and not from what's currently being exposed in the courtroom and his record. As a kid my grandson has always been very respectful and well mannered. He comes from a two parent household that has always taught him right from wrong and to treat people with kindness regardless if he felt they didn't deserve it.

Johnathan obtained his high school diploma under unfortunate circumstances while maintaining a part-time job. His mother (my daughter) and baby brother was murdered by her estranged boyfriend 01/05/2006. This has caused tremendous trauma to Johnathan, his brother Jamel and my family, causing sudden behavior changes; such as partaking in irrational decision making. Also, causing him to cry out for help on social media, constantly stating how much he misses his mother and brother. For a while he would lean on family members talking about how his life has changed and the person that had given him and his brother a loving and caring

lifestyle was taken away from them at an early age. At the time, Johnathan was sixteen and his brother was fifteen. After the passing of their mother and baby brother Johnathan and his brother was forced to come stay with me, after their dad could no longer care for them, because of his situation. During the time my grandsons lived with me, I made sure they both would graduate from high school with Johnathan maintaining a GPA of 2.8. Getting them back and forth to school each day and requiring them to keep a part-time job to show them responsibility and integrity that would make them into responsible mature young men one day. Your honor, I can say this, the path that God has chosen for my grandsons has not been easy, as young African American males they are faced with many obstacles each day, peer pressure being one of them.

I know Johnathan is no saint, however, he's no murderer that deserve half of his life to be taken away, due to lack of life trauma, immature irrational decisions and poor choices.

Me and my family send our sincerest condolences to the young lady who loss her life and her family, but hear me from my heart when I say we are going through the same thing. October 15th 2017 Jonathan loss his cousin whom was like a brother to him due to an overdose. My grandson Dion Price was only twenty-two at the time. So, we definitely feel the pain her family is going through. As bad as we wanted to charge the guy who was responsible for distributing the drugs to my grandson, my daughter decided not to, because she felt his dealer did not force him to take the drugs as well she was not approached by the police to even look for the guy who sold him the drugs. So instead my daughter will be bringing awareness to teens and young adults who is dying due to this drug. Why put somebody in jail for the rest of their life? What kind of example will the justice system be setting, by imprisoning young men? The same system that allows predators, 2nd degree murders out in five-seven years with good behavior? Why not start with getting this

stuff from out of the hands of pharmacies and doctor's first. Why not create more drug programs and rehabilitation centers for young people who are struggling with this addiction?

I'm not condoning what my grandson was doing, but I will not accept the fact that he's being charged for this young ladies life. Using drugs is a choice your honor, just like choosing not to use drugs is a choice.

I'm begging and pleading to please take into consideration my grandson's life, yes, charge him for distributing the drug but charging him for the young ladies life is not fair. I would love for my grandson to be able to raise his only child (daughter) whom was just born 08/23/2018. I could go on but Johnathan has family that loves him and will stand behind him 100 percent.

Thank you for your time Judge Ronnie White.

Sincerely,

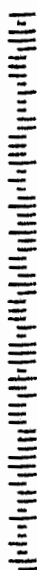
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